MONTEREY NEWS

April 2017

Est. 1970 Vol. XLVII · Number 4

The library is in need of upgrades to meet public building codes and energy efficiencies, and for the health and safety of the patrons and the employees. Monterey will keep an important historical building in the village center preserved and it will be accessible and safe for all members of our community. See pages 6 and 7.

The photo above, of the first Monterey library, is from Peter Murkett's Monterey—A Local History *(photo courtesy of June Tryon). To learn more about Peter's book, and the Monterey History Project begun by Wendy Germain, come to this month's community potluck supper on April 19. See page 27.*

Town clerk and treasurer—elected or appointed? See a report, letters, and a statement on pages 2–3, 14, 15, and 30.

What makes this truly "Our House" is what came after the debates were settled and the funding votes were taken.
In My View page 8

This year, the Monterey Cultural Council awarded twenty-two full or partial grants totaling $4,000.
Cultural Council Grants page 9

The planning board must take very seriously that this is the *only* opportunity the town has to assess the impact this camp expansion will have.
Planning Board Review page 13

The hatchery is planning to have on hand fifty- to one-hundred-year-old sturgeon in one of their outdoor tanks.
Swim with Sturgeons page 3

We're a combination of nature, nurture, and whatever-you-choose-to-call-the-force-that-fuels-the-larger-picture-we-call-the-cosmos.
Bunny Trail page 16

Roger let it slip that it would be much easier to do the arduous work in a warm climate.
Producers Under Pressure page 19

Officers also responded to loose dogs on Pixley and Brett Roads. Perhaps they'd heard about the cows.
Police Report page 22

How wonderful the shrill clarion of a lofty flock of snow geese breaking the chilled stillness of the pale blue sky of early spring over Lake Garfield
Snow Geese page 23

Special Town Meeting
March 2

The town was called to assemble at a special town meeting at 7 p.m., March 2, to consider four articles on the warrant. It was a pleasant evening and somewhere between forty and fifty townspeople showed up to make these decisions.

The first two articles sought permission to reallocate money already in the budget for other purposes. Article 1 asked the town to transfer the sum of $7,210, originally approved for the painting of town hall, to a new account to repair/renovate town hall. Select board chair Kenn Basler explained that the only thing this money can currently be used for is painting. There is a need to create a space for the town administrator, already estimated at $5,000, as well as to make some repairs. He emphasized that this money has already been raised and therefore would not affect the tax rate. There was little discussion and the article passed by unanimous voice vote.

Article 2 asked that $1,500 from the town administrator salary line item be moved to pay for town administrator expenses. With no discussion, the article passed by unanimous voice vote.

Article 3 was a little more involved. Attached to the warrant for the meeting was a sheet that detailed the Community Development Block Grant loan/grant program to help seniors of moderate or low-income means to make repairs and improvements in their homes so that they are not forced from their homes because they can't afford the needed work. As Basler explained, this program, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Economic Development, provides up to $40,000 to qualifying homeowners. The money is a 0% interest loan, with deferred payments. 1/15 of the loan is forgiven each year, so that at the end of the fifteen-year period, the entire amount will have been forgiven. Should an owner sell, the balance of the loan is then repaid from the proceeds of the sale. (A more detailed description of the program appeared in the select board corner of the March *Monterey News.*)

The article asked to move $20,000 from free cash to a new contingency fund specifically for the program. After eighteen months this money would be moved back to free cash. There were two or three comments or questions, but the article passed by unanimous voice vote.

Town Clerk's Position

Article 4 was clearly what drew the attendance. The article asked the town to change the position of town clerk from an elected to an appointed position. Once the article was read, Moderator Mark Makuc gave select board member Carol Edelman the floor.

Ms. Edelman began with a statement of appreciation to a lengthy list of town employees. But she urged the voters to consider the role of the town clerk. Town clerks, as with teachers and doctors, and many others, serve in service positions. She pointed out that an elected town clerk cannot be vetted for suitability to the job. An elected clerk cannot be directed as to how to do the job, or whether or when to keep office hours. She mentioned that as a school teacher, she was appointed, not elected, which helped to maintain the integrity of the school's program. "We don't elect doctors," she said, and listed other positions where we look for expertise in service positions. In addition, the pool for potential appointed positions is much larger since we can look out of Monterey.

Hillel Maximon spoke with concern about making this change. "Once we've made the change it's permanent. We can't say, 'Oops!' It is permanent and irreversible. In addition, it puts more power into the hands of the few." He went on to make the point that while we try to hire the best people for appointed positions, we don't always succeed.

Susan Cooper pointed out that during the past five years she's had difficulty with getting the clerk's services. "We need someone under supervision, who can be dismissed if they aren't doing their job."

Barbara Swann stood to deliver the longest commentary on this proposed change. She began by saying that this article is a form of "warrant boarding," a form of torture. "We had this last spring, and last fall." She informed the town that of the 351 cities and towns in Massachusetts, 238 have elected town clerks. The remaining 113, with appointed town clerks, are all towns of 5,000 or more residents, with a city-style government. "In our town you want a clerk who is a neighbor, building community."

Addressing the question of the skills needed to becoming a competent town clerk, Barbara pointed out that there are trainings four times a year. "Within a year a new clerk can be up-and-going."

"The clerk is the witness for events in town. To town births, marriages, deaths, elections, and to town meetings."

And she contended that we already have a vetting system in place through the process of the town's Democratic and Republican town caucuses that nominate

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candidates. At this point, she offered an amendment, "…unless the town committees present a candidate for town ballot for May elections."

While her amendment was seconded, and thus became the official topic of the meeting, Moderator Makuc had to work hard to keep the discussion to the new amendment. Jon Sylbert rose to speak of the decreasing opportunities for citizen participation, leading to complacency, and information of what is happening in town government is diminished. Jim Edelman's comments addressed the aging population in Berkshire County, and in Monterey, and he feels that makes it more difficult to find candidates for elected positions. He also stated that many of our residents who have lived in Monterey for many years, and were active in town affairs before, feel they have already done their service for the town.

The moderator drew the attention back to Ms. Swann's amendment. A voice vote was insufficiently conclusive, so a counted vote was taken, and the amendment failed. Without further discussion the article was called, and a vote was taken. Again a counted vote was necessary, and the article to change to an appointed position passed by 32-24.

The moderator called the meeting to a close, but the chatting wasn't over.

Final Votes

Treasurer and Town Clerk

At this point the town has voted at special town meetings to make the treasurer and the town clerk positions appointed. A second vote by the town is required, this time on the ballot for town elections. Each position will appear asking the voters to make the positions appointed. If the vote is for appointed for either position, then the select board will appoint to the position(s).

The ballot will also list candidates who are vying for either of the positions. If the voters choose to keep one or both positions as elected, then winning candidates on the ballot will be elected.

If the positions do become appointed, then any candidates for election could certainly be considered by the select board when they make their appointment.

—Stephen Moore

Skating Rink Breakdown

The Monterey skating rink comes down on April 15, at 9:30 a.m. Helpers are needed for easy disassembly and clean up. No experience necessary. Please bring a cordless drill, dolly, or broom if convenient. The job takes ninety minutes with sufficient assistance. Any questions, email sgraves8@yahoo.com.

—Steve Graves

Last summer George started "shopping" for sturgeon for this year's water ballet.

Swim with the Sturgeons!

Fish Hatchery Fundraiser

George Emmons would like to encourage both brave participants and curious onlookers to the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery. On one of the fishing derby days this summer, the hatchery is planning to have on hand fifty- to one hundred-year-old sturgeon in one of their outdoor tanks, and participants will attempt water ballet with them. This is strictly for fun, and there will be free showers at home when you're done. A $5 donation to support the hatchery programs will be requested. The date will be announced later this spring once they've secured enough suitably large sturgeon.

Having a Good Day

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April Broadband Update

Monterey is actively engaged in negotiations with two broadband providers. Fiber Connect represents the best solution based on the Monterey-specific Request for Proposal (RFP) process and Frontier was selected as the best solution from the multi-town RFP process. At the same time, we are asking Mass Broadband Institute (MBI)/Mass Technology Collaborative (MTC) to commit to releasing the construction, design, and engineering funds allocated as part of the last mile program so that work can begin as soon as a final selection is made.

The two proposals under consideration would bring fiber optic broadband services to Monterey. There are significant differences in the proposals relative to town costs, time to deploy, and subscriber offerings. We are balancing the current needs and pent-up demand with the fact that the solution selected may be in place for the next fifteen years. The recommended solution must remain technologically current and financially viable over its useful life.

Our state House delegation, Representative Pignatelli and Senator Hinds, have increased their involvement in the process and are leading the charge to get final approval of the monies allocated to the project by MBI.

Again, a monthly update is difficult as this article is written in advance of key upcoming meetings and decisions. We are investigating alternate means of communication to keep residents informed as new information becomes available.

Please check the MontereyMA.gov website for new information and send questions to broadband@montereyma.gov.

—Cliff Weiss
Monterey Broadband Committee

Lake Garfield Working Group
April Update

At the Lake Garfield Working Group (LGWG) meeting held in town hall on March 13, Dr. Ken Wagner gave a presentation on the nature and details of the work being done in fulfillment of the 604b grant currently underway. Dr. Wagner also discussed what he believes are the next appropriate steps that the town can take based on the data collected.

Other topics addressed at the meeting included a public survey that the group has been drafting, as well as a review of the letter of recommendations that the LGWG submitted to the select board on March 8. A link to the full text of this letter, as well as other LGWG documents, can be found at the end of this article. Also, in preparation for a vote to be held at the annual town meeting on May 6, the group discussed ways to better educate the public as to how these recommendations would benefit the health of the lake.

Dr. Wagner's Work

The meeting opened with Dr. Wagner's presentation where he discussed both the overall purpose of the lake water study, as well as the primary tasks that the study will undertake. The purpose of this study is to measure nutrient levels at various key locations in the lake and establish a baseline nutrient profile upon which assessments can be made regarding lake conditions. In other words, by understanding nutrient levels throughout the lake, we may begin to better understand the various forces acting on the lake, and ultimately begin to address "lake health."

The first of the tasks that Dr. Wagner's study will conduct is a required "Quality Assurance Project Plan" (QAPP) which lays out the means and methods of data collection. This QAPP has already been drafted and is currently under final review by the state.

Task 2 will collect data to establish dissolved oxygen profiles within the lake. Just as terrestrial animals require oxygen in the air to survive, aquatic organisms require oxygen dissolved in water to survive. Various factors can impact oxygen saturation and cause anoxia, the absence of oxygen, including pollution from sewage, lawn clippings, agricultural runoff, etc. Combined with increased phosphorus levels (addressed by Tasks 3 & 4), anoxia can promote the growth of algal blooms, or the rapid increase of algae populations in a lake. Algal blooms can have various harmful effects on other organisms, as well as various undesirable effects on recreational activities generally associated with water clarity.

Tasks 3 and 4 will address both in-lake phosphorus levels, as well as inflowing phosphorus concentrations. In-lake measurements will be taken evenly throughout the lake, whereas inflow measurements will be taken at nine inflow locations that have been identified through a wet weather field survey. Inflow measurements also have the capacity to identify areas where phosphorus is entering the lake at relatively high levels. These measurements may give cause to research what sources may be contributing to this nutrient loading. As stated above, a major concern around phosphorus levels has to do with their correlation with algal blooming.

Arriving Where We Started: Portraits of a Family and Friends

Dorene Beller Mark Simmons

through April 22

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Joan Dix Blair

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May 5: artist talk 5:30-6, reception 6-7:30

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Task 5 is the last task that involves data collection and will include superficial sediment sampling. This sampling will establish a baseline of nutrient levels already present in the lake bottom.

Tasks 6 and beyond involve analysis and reporting and will help establish metrics by which we may start to address the issue of defining "lake health."

Looking Forward

Funding is available via a 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution state grant* for use in implementing a "Watershed Management Plan." The requirements of this grant include the data that will be provided by the lake water study described above, as well as a comprehensive management plan. This plan would presumably be established through close involvement with town residents in conjunction with the LGWG. While plans are not being made to pursue this grant at this time, it is on our radar as a logical next step in the process of establishing lake management procedures.

The public survey was also discussed, which the group hopes to make available soon. The survey is intended to both engage town residents in the lake management process as well as begin to identify what issues are most important to town residents in determining what a "healthy Lake Garfield watershed" means to them. This survey is still a work in progress, but will be made available on the LGWG page on the town website when it is finalized.

Recommendations

As described in greater detail in the February LGWG article, the LGWG submitted recommendations to the select board of actions that should be taken this year as a means of beginning to mitigate the spread of the invasive plant e.milfoil. These recommendations, if enacted, would result in a line item in the town budget for purposes of posting an invitation for contractors to bid on the work to be conducted. With that in mind, the LGWG intends to hold a special informational meeting, open to the public to discuss the recommendations in further detail and answer any questions the public may have prior to the May 6 town meeting. The LGWG invites anyone interested to attend this special informational meeting to be held May 1, at 7 p.m., at the town hall.

The LGWG is working with the town to soon have links to all meeting minutes, other official public documents pertinent to the LGWG (including written recommendations to the select board) and various research materials compiled on the town website. Go to montereyma.gov, under Departments, click on Lake Garfield.

The next LGWG committee meeting will be held at the town hall, 7 p.m., April 10. All interested parties are encouraged to attend.

—Eric Danforth
Lake Garfield Working Group

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Monterey Town Administrator

Mr. Willie Morales was hired as a part-time, twenty-hours-per-week town administrator in late November, for a probationary period of six months. In late February, we discussed with him, at a regular weekly select board meeting, an informal review to see how things were going, what was working, where we might make changes or improvements, and a date for the review was agreed upon. However, within the week, Mr. Morales gave us a letter of resignation stating his decision to leave, for "personal reasons" (his words). We also learned that he had been offered an increase to a full-time position in Sandisfield, where he had also been working twenty hours per week. We accepted his resignation.

We learned a great deal about the benefits of working with a town administrator who is under the direction of the select board, and we anticipate that we will begin a search process for another TA. The previous TA search committee was composed of volunteer community members, and did not include select board members or town employees. We hired the candidate they screened and presented to us.

—Kenn Basler, chair, Steve Weisz, and Carol Edelman
Monterey Select Board

Monterey Community
Potluck Suppers

Join us on April 19 to hear:
Wendy Germain

The Monterey History Project
inspired by Peter Murkett's
Monterey- A Local History

See the community potluck supper article on page 27 for more info.

3rd Wednesdays, October–May
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Monterey Library Project
A Critical Vote at Town Meeting

It's time to give an update on the progress of the Monterey Library building project. Our application for a construction grant was filed January 26 as required, and we are awaiting word of our ranking by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), which we will receive in July. That announcement will let us know when we will receive our estimated grant of $1,917,459, which is a considerable portion of the total $3,056,840 projected project cost. These grants are never partially funded. While the final number may differ by a few dollars, it will add up to just under two-thirds of the allowable cost. We know we will need to raise $1,102,324. Our matching funds can come from multiple sources. We are grateful to the Friends of the Monterey Library who spent over $20,000 to help with the planning and design grant, and have already raised almost $40,000 for our new and improved library. We are working with Dennis Lynch, Monterey's grant writer, on a grant from the federal government. We will continue to fundraise and search out grants but we are a long way from what we need to match the state money.

Town Commitment to Financing

In order for the state money to be guaranteed, we need to guarantee our share. This state construction grant program has been around for over thirty years and has been very successful. The Mason Library in Great Barrington is a great example of what can be done. The MBLC, which administers the grant, has advised us that the most efficient and economical way to manage the whole financial project is to have the town approve borrowing for the total amount. While the bulk of the costs for this project will be incurred during the actual physical construction, which will be in years two and three, grant payments are disbursed by a strict formula of equal increments over a period of five fiscal years, with each payment requiring achievement of set milestones. The loan balance will be in constant flux with drawdowns being made to cover project costs as needed, and yearly state grant disbursements as well as payments made by the town, being applied to the outstanding balance. Interest expense is based on the outstanding borrowed amount, not the total approved amount. We do not foresee ever having to borrow the entire amount. However, the MBLC requires that we have the full amount available to us, and after all these years of running this successful program, they know what works best. An approval in May at the annual town meeting of the warrant request to borrow the full estimated cost of construction will verify the town's commitment to the project and will ensure that we can hit the ground running as soon as we receive a favorable ranking notification in July.

After Town Meeting

The first phase of the project will be to finalize the design based on what the town approved in an earlier town meeting vote and then to apply for the permits necessary to start. There will also be a period of putting the project out to bid according to state regulation. This could take the better part of a year. If the town has approved borrowing the money in the upcoming May town meeting, and we are fortunate enough to be ranked high in the July MBLC announcement, we can finalize the grant contract and start that process. If we do not vote to approve this at town meeting in May and have to wait until the next annual meeting to get local approval, we will be behind in this process a whole year. We don't know for sure, but construction costs don't usually go down so the longer we spend in this process the more likely that it will be more expensive. The grant value is based on the construction estimate presented this past January—it will not increase.

Town Meeting Warrant Article

We are working on an article for the annual town meeting that will accomplish this. It will be complex to satisfy the legal requirements of borrowing three million dollars, and also to protect the town. There will be three conditions.

The first condition is that the money will not be borrowed if the state does not sign the contract to give us their share. The state has already approved their bond to fund this grant round and is looking to give out this money.

The second condition would be that the amount of money borrowed could be reduced by using donations and other grants as they are raised and awarded. If a federal grant comes through, and the Friends of the Monterey Library continue to raise money, we will lower the amount the town puts in. We will continue to search out grants and other avenues of raising money to lessen the burden on the taxpayer.

The third condition on the article will be that it would need to pass an exclusion vote on Proposition 2 ½. This will be important since the town budget should not be constrained or controlled by this

Birds-eye views (left) and site plan (above) for the proposed library expansion. Interior floor plan is shown on page 27.

project. There will be protection for the town through these conditions.

Financial Plan

Clearly, this is a complex article and there will be much discussion. It is impossible to predict interest rates, and we won't know those rates until we complete the loan process and use the money. There are various ways to build into the loan that the state grant money will come in five years while the town money will likely be through a fifteen-year borrowing plan. There may be one loan to cover the state money and one for the town's portion. The bank that Monterey works with is researching how best to do this. We hope to have some basic answers to these questions by the town meeting vote. This is one of the largest authorizations the Town of Monterey will have ever voted on at town meeting, and we want everyone to understand it.

Please Support Your Library

The state library grant is a wonderful opportunity to update your library, making it accessible and safe for the entire community, and to provide more services than ever. We want to give you time to understand what we are proposing and also time to ask questions and let us know your concerns. We have been in close discussion with the select board and the finance committee. We are also having an open house at the library on Saturday, April 22, from 10 to 11:30, so that you may come in and see the design plan again and ask questions about the finances. We also invite questions at any time. The library trustees now have their own email address, montereylibrarytrustees@gmail.com, but you can also email the library directly at montereylibrary@gmail.com.

Check out the library website for the plans and frequently asked questions. Or simply stop in and ask anytime. Throughout this process we have sought out what the people who live in Monterey want, and we have presented you with a library design that answers the needs of the town. We have been working on the best way to fund this project and are presenting you with a plan that will minimize the impact on the tax rate. We thank you for your support thus far by allowing us to apply for the state grant and approving the design. Now we ask that you support the town's financial commitment at the annual town meeting on May 6 to help see this dream become a reality.

—Monterey Library Trustees
Lisa Smyle, Chair, Mickey Jervas, Kenn Basler, MaryPaul Yates, Beth Reiter, and John Higgins

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Why vote in favor of this?

- The eighty-six year old library is in need of upgrades to meet public building codes and energy efficiencies, and for the health and safety of the patrons and the employees.
- If passed in May, work will commence as soon as the grant is awarded in July.
- This grant program has built libraries for thirty years.
- Delays in funding this project could result in construction cost increases.
- The Friends of the Monterey Library have already raised $40,000.
- The Monterey grant writer is already working on supplemental grant.
- Monterey will keep an important historical building in the village center preserved and it will be accessible and safe for all members of our community.

What will the town meeting vote mean?

- The vote will authorize the town to borrow up to the full amount of the library renovation and addition project if the following conditions are met:
- The MBLC grant is awarded to Monterey.
- The amount can be reduced if other monies are raised through fundraising and other grants.
- The town votes at the annual election to exclude the debt from Proposition 2-1/2.

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In My View
Our House

"Our House" will be opening its doors this month. I am talking about the Monterey Community Center.

In 1995 Edith Wilson passed away. While I didn't have the privilege of meeting her, I get a sense of her love of Monterey through her paintings that grace the walls of the town hall. It wasn't until I read her last will and testament, that I got a sense of her devotion to the town.

She loved Monterey and left her house to us, with the specific instructions that it was to be "shared by all" as a community gathering spot.

But this is not why I consider it "Our House."

The house she left was in extremely poor condition. There were folks who felt that it would be too costly to renovate. Others thought that once restored, it would be too small for public use. Some feared its operation would be a drain on our annual budget. These were valid concerns.

There were others who felt that Edith's gift was too compelling to give up. 28.6 acres of land, near the center of town, was worth the money and effort to preserve. Also, valid feelings.

What makes this truly "Our House" is what came after the debates were settled and the funding votes were taken. In May of 1996, the town voted to accept this gift. A committee was formed to restore the house for the benefit of the town, using both public and private funds. Aside from some early work to stabilize the structures, there followed a period of several years of dormancy. But then some new energy arrived. The grounds were cleaned up and a community garden was established. Edith's little farmhouse was stripped of its rotting façade and obsolete mechanicals. Then the 'people' of Monterey began to rebuild it.

From the Wilson-McLaughlin Committee (Laurie Shaw, Evelyn Vallianos, Mary Makuc, Cara Carroll, Christine Goldfinger, Cynthia Weber, Michael Banner, Joe Baker), to the efforts of Jim Edelman (roofing), Leigh & Shawn Tryon (trucking, old fuel tank removal, landscaping, excavation, septic system installation), Chris Tryon (septic system design), Rob Hoogs (engineering plans), Eric Pedersen (carpentry), Lanny Lanoue (carpentry), Roy Carwile (carpentry), Mark Amstead (carpentry), Matthew and Mitchell Amstead (carpentry), Stephen Moore (finish woodworking), Chris Vlcek (architecture consulting), Chris Blair (design consulting), Dennis Downing (attorney), Dan Andrus (electrician), to the many many unnamed others who donated their time and their money, this "community center" was indeed built by all of us, the Monterey Community.

Edith Wilson's wish has been fulfilled. It is now up to each of us to embrace this gift by using the Monterey Community Center for the benefit of all Monterey residents and guests.

After all, it is "Our House."

— Steven Weisz
Select Board member

Editor's Note: In My View *is a monthly feature for this paper. It provides the individual select board members an opportunity, on a rotating basis, to communicate their thoughts about town affairs—reflections, opinions, and updates on topics of their choice. The views expressed are solely those of the writer, and are not meant to reflect the views of the full select board.*

From the Tax Collector's Office

The fiscal year 2017 real estate and personal property bills for the fourth quarter will be mailed by April 1 and are due May 1. If you do not receive your bill, please contact the tax collector's office at (413) 528-1443 x117.

Please direct all questions regarding assessments, abatement applications, and personal property taxes to the board of assessors, PO Box 488, Monterey, MA 01245, or call (413) 528-1443 x115.

To accommodate taxpayers who want the convenience of paying Monterey real estate and personal property taxes online, an online payment option is available. To pay your tax, you must have your current bill and checkbook/credit card in hand. Log on to montereyma.gov and click on Pay Real Estate Taxes Online. You will need to enter your current bill number and the current bill year (2017). The bank will assess a minimal fee of $0.25 per transaction. MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards will be accepted. Please note the credit card company will charge the taxpayer a fee for the service. This fee is not assessed by or paid to the Town of Monterey.

— Mari Enoch
Tax Collector

Monterey Cultural Council

2017 Grants

The priority of our Monterey Cultural Council (MCC) is to serve the Monterey community and its artists and educators by funding events and experiences that enrich our cultural lives. We use both state and local funds.

This year, the MCC considered forty-six applications for grants from the Massachusetts Cultural Council funds, and awarded twenty-two full or partial grants totaling $4,000. These grants, in combination with town funds of $1,250, are supporting science and arts activities for children and adults, scholarships for participation in theater and music activities in the Berkshires, and exhibits, outdoor education activities, and performances here in Monterey and in surrounding communities.

Grants were awarded to several Monterey applicants including:

- Bidwell House for Student Interns and Township No. 1 Community Day
- Monterey Library for children's summer programs
- Knox Gallery for artist talks
- Karl Finger to explore and perform American folk music

Local institutions, individuals, and communities receiving support include:

- Lenox Contra Dance
- Flying Cloud Institute for science and art workshopsIS183 Art School of the Berkshires
- Berkshire Children's Chorus
- Berkshire Bach Society
- Sculpture Now
- Dan Weston/NMC Elementary for the Amidon's school program
- New Marlborough Village Association, for Music & More
- Dewey Hall for Dewey Hall Presents
- Berkshire Pulse for cultural traditions residency program

Having a Good Day

- Seeing new growth on a plant you'd given up for dead.
- After a long, futile search you find your car keys in the jacket worn the day before.

The MCC is grateful for the town funds we receive to support these experiences.

The council is always looking for new members. The council meets on the third Monday of every month, at 7:30 p.m., in the town hall. Everyone is welcome to join us.

For more information, go to our page on the town website, montereyma.gov, under departments, or visit our Facebook page. Look us up and would much appreciate a like. We are hoping that our Facebook page will provide the community with a way to communicate with the MCC and also help to keep the community updated with times and dates of events happening in the area.

—Neighborly Yours,
Monterey Cultural Council

Library News

Egg Hunt

Mark your calendars! On Sunday, April 16, at 1:00 p.m.—sharp, children up to age twelve are invited to hunt for hundreds of eggs. This is sponsored by the Monterey Coffee Club and the Friends of the Monterey Library. Don't be late—there are few things children do faster than find those eggs, and it is usually over in a matter of minutes.

Open House

The library trustees cordially invite everyone to an open house to explain the warrant article concerning the library building project on Saturday, April 22, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. This is an informal session to explain why the article is written as it is and answer your questions so you can be an informed voter. The Friends of the Library will provide refreshments. Please bring your questions, concerns, and comments.

Book Group

On Monday, April 24, at 7:30 p.m., the adult book discussion group will discuss *Hillbilly Elegy*, by J. D. Vance. All are welcome to join them. They are always open to new members and suggestions for good reads.

New Access App

Finally, the library, through CWMARS, has an app to fit both Android and Apple products. Instructions and links are available on the library website, or just go to the Google play store or Apple app store, and search for C/W MARS. Once you have downloaded it you have the option of picking a home library. Choose Monterey and you will be able to renew items, place holds, search databases, check our hours, and even view upcoming events on our calendar! Check out our new logo!

—Mark Makuc
Library Director
MontereyMassLibrary.org

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Transfer Station
Grand Opening April 22

After a lot of hard work, coupled with many delays in getting our equipment, the Monterey transfer station will be opening in the new location just down the road from the current station, on Saturday, April 22. How fitting—it turns out to be Earth Day. We're going to have a grand opening party—join us—lots of information on recycling—hot dogs from 11 to 12:30. All the regulars will be there. Dave, Ben, and Beth will be educating the masses on proper transfer station ettiquette. Check out the new swap shop that Beth has designed. Don't miss the fun (I know, I know, it's a transfer station, but it's new and for one day, let's party!)

New Programs for Monterey

Mattress Recycling

Massachusetts residents and businesses discard approximately 600,000 mattresses and box springs annually, with two-thirds being collected and shipped out of state. That leaves 200,000 mattresses unloaded at landfills and incinerators around the state each year. These discarded mattresses and box springs can be notoriously difficult to manage. Mattresses have long been the bane of landfills, where they take up a disproportionate amount of space. Their metal coils also damage shredding equipment that breaks up trash before it's burned at incinerators.

They are expensive to transport, take up a lot of space in landfills, are hard to compact, and lead to excessive costs for disposal. In Monterey we have had to pay up to $30.00 per mattress for disposal. The good news is that mattresses are made up almost entirely of recyclable materials. So, recycling or reuse only makes sense. Once disassembled, up to 95% of mattress/boxspring components—the coils, foam, cotton, and wood—can be recycled.

Last year the MA EPA made available a number of programs to help communities deal with the mattress problem. Monterey joined with a number of other south county towns and applied for monies to be used for transporting mattresses to a recycling operation. Monterey's and Beckett's proposals were accepted and we were granted funds that will pay a facility in the eastern part of the state (non-out-west) the hauling costs.

Once the new transfer station opens all you have to do is bring your mattress to the station and one of the attendants will show you where the covered dumpster is that will only be used for mattresses. There will be no cost.

Textile Recycling

Textile Recovery Initiative

The EPA's report on municipal solid waste states 6% of all materials going into landfills or incinerators are clothing or textile products. According to waste composition analyses, approximately 230,000 tons of usable clothing, footwear, linens and other textile products are thrown away in Massachusetts annually.

Approximately 95% of all used clothing, footwear, and other household textile products such as sheets, towels, curtains, pillows, and stuffed animals can be reused or recycled, yet only 15% of reusable textiles are recovered from the waste stream.

The EPA reports only 2.3 million tons of used clothing and household textiles are recovered for reuse and recycling annually in the U.S., while more than 15 million tons are discarded in our nation's landfills and incinerators.

Environmental Impact

Textile reuse and recycling has the second highest potential environmental impact on reducing greenhouse gases compared to other recyclables. Recycling 2.3 million tons of clothing per year is the equivalent of removing 1.3 million cars from U.S. roads.

Donate! Contrary to popular belief, donations of textiles in any condition are welcomed at the Monterey transfer station. The swap shop takes in reusable items in good condition to be reused or you can deposit any cloth item, regardless of condition, in the bin next to the swap shop. This includes clothes with stains, rips, missing buttons, or broken zippers. The only unacceptable donations are wet/moldy items and items contaminated with oil or hazardous substances.

Please help us out by not putting any cloth items in the trash. This will keep our costs down and will help control the overfilling of our landfills.

Food Waste and Compost

Bring your food waste and get back compost.

Beginning in June we will be starting a new recycle program that will turn kitchen food waste into garden-ready compost. Working with Gould Farm and the MA EPA compost initiative group, Monterey received funding to cover the costs associated with a food waste/compost experimental program. There will be household kitchen size food waste containers available for residents that want to participate and a specialized dumpster to receive the food waste at the transfer station. Participating residents will bring their food waste to the transfer station to be dumped into the food waste dumpster. Gould Farm will remove the waste on a regular basis and include it in their large-scale compost project. At regular intervals there will be garden-ready compost available to take home.

We're excited about this program not only because it removes recyclable materials from the waste stream, but it also links the town with Gould Farm in a positive and beneficial way. There will be more on this program in the next issue of the *Monterey News.*

—Kenn Basler

❊

DENNIS J. DOWNING
Attorney at Law

❊

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Monterey Community Center News

As we write this column, the long wait is about to be over. The last piece that we know of that is required for the final inspection has been installed, and we are just waiting now for the inspection to take place.

When the new status of the center is official, we will be opening up our newly designed website at ccmonterey.org, where you will always find, among other things, the current event calendar. There you will see what is going on with time, details, and contact information for each event. In order to schedule your own event or activity, please contact our event coordinator by emailing calendar@ccmonterey.org or calling 528-3600 and leaving a voicemail.

There are already a number of activities that will be taking place in the first weeks of operation of the center. The list includes several Monterey Council on Aging meetings, yoga classes, a series of presentations about our honeybee neighbors, etc. The website contains pages with user procedures and a description of what uses involve fees and what those fees are.

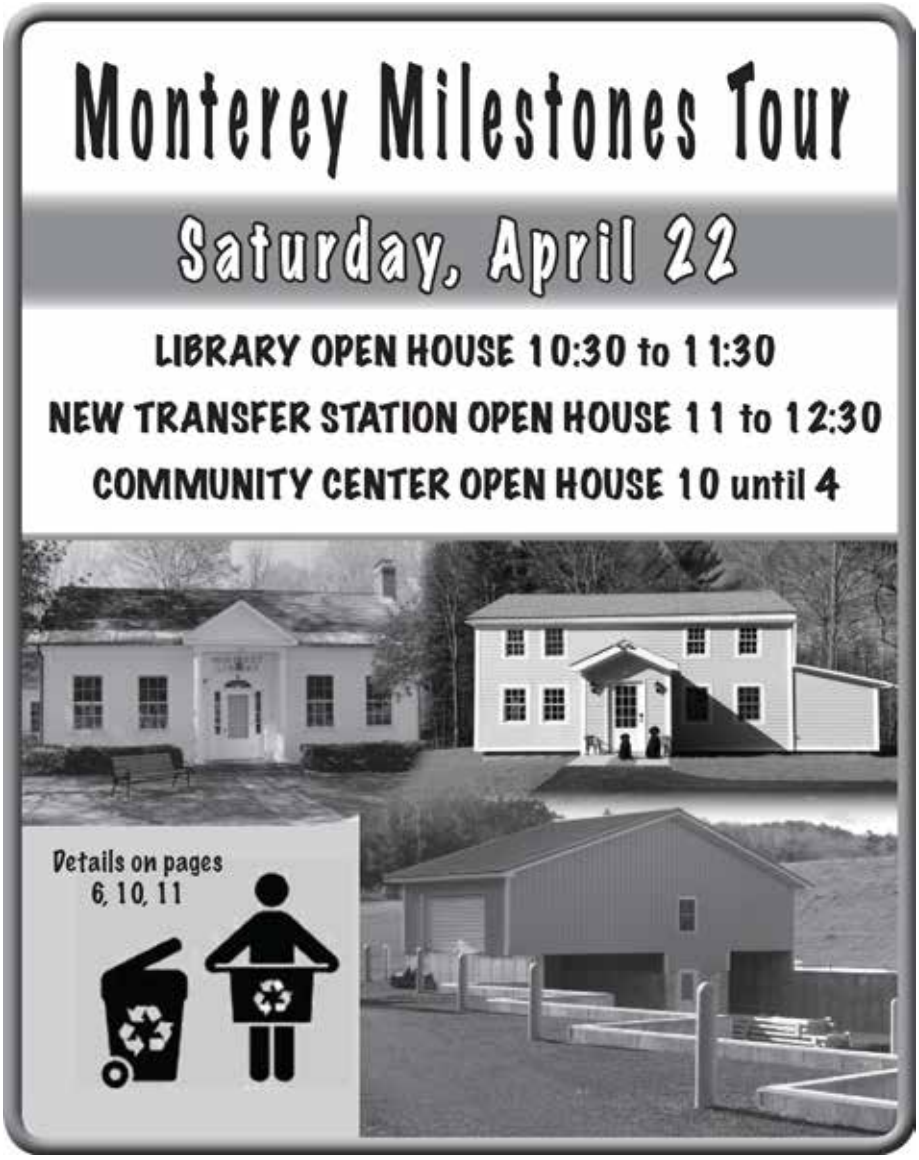
We hope you will make a point of stopping in to visit your community center, especially on our open house to be held Saturday, April 29, 2017, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., when we will be showing off the facility and making everyone welcome.

Yes, it's true—we now have a phone in the center: 413-528-3600.

You can help us spread the word and make the center a valued part of community life by liking us on Facebook and joining our group. Bookmark our website ccmonterey.org for easy reference about events and activities.

Thank you for your support. We always welcome additional contributions as we swing into operational mode.

—Friends of Wilson McLaughlin House
PO Box 302, Monterey, MA 01245


Monterey Milestones Tour
Saturday, April 22
LIBRARY OPEN HOUSE 10:30 to 11:30
NEW TRANSFER STATION OPEN HOUSE 11 to 12:30
COMMUNITY CENTER OPEN HOUSE 10 until 4
Details on pages
6, 10, 11

May 10 Town Election Slate

The year's election for town officers will be held on Tuesday, May 10. Polls will be open from 12 noon until 7 p.m., at the Monterey firehouse. The last day to register as a voter is Saturday, April 15, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., and 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Below is the slate for the election. Incumbents are indicated by asterisks. Party affiliation, or Independent status, is noted in parentheses for contested seats.

Note: This list is as accurate as could be when going to print. Information for this list came from party committees, the town clerk's office, and from candidates contacting the Monterey News *directly.*

Contested Seats

Finance Committee (3 years)
Don Coburn (D)
George Cain (R)

Select Board (3 years)
Kenn Basler (R)
Michael Johnson (I)

Town Clerk (1 year)
MaryPaul Yates (D & R)
Hillel Maximon (I)

Uncontested Seats

Board of Appeals (5 years)
Gary Shaw (D & R)

Board of Assessors (1 year)
Donald Hopkins (R).

Board of Assessors (3 years)
Robert Lazzarini* (D)

Board of Health (3 years)
John Makuc* (R)

Cemetery Commission (3 years)
David Brown* (D & R)

Library Trustee (3 years, vote for 2)
John Higgins* (R)
Shannon Amidon Castille (D & R)

Moderator (1 year)
Mark Makuc* (D & R)

Parks Commission (3 years)
Pam Johnson (D & R)

Planning Board (5 years, vote for 2)
Pat Salomon* (D & R)
Don Coburn (D & R)

Town Treasurer (2 years)
Rebecca Wolin (D)

Tree Warden (1 year)
Winston Wilson* (R)

Town Election Candidates' Statements

Any candidates who wish to are encouraged to submit statements to the *Monterey News* to be published in the May issue, which will hopefully be available no later than Friday, April 28. The deadline for statements is April 15.

Statements can be submitted by email to MontereyNews9@gmail.com, or mailed to PO Box 9.

P.O. Box 9

Herbicides on the Warrant Again

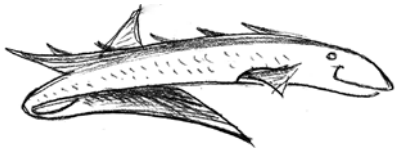
Last year, at annual town meeting, the voters voiced their wishes regarding the use of chemical herbicides in Lake Garfield, thanks to an article on the warrant. The discussion and the vote were valuable then, providing a clear understanding that a strong majority favored a one-year ban or moratorium. Soon this one-year ban will be up and some may wonder what happens next. We have an active working group, with monthly meetings open to the public, to consider what's best for the lake. The group has asked for public input and has been guided by last year's town meeting vote. There is currently no move towards use of chemicals.

This year I have put an article on the warrant so voters can again speak. Here is the wording:

"To see if the town will vote to approve this non-binding resolution: That there be no use of chemical herbicides in Lake Garfield for the next five years."

A "yes" vote means, "I agree. This speaks for me. I want no use of chemical herbicides." Such a vote will support the Lake Garfield Working Group in the direction it is currently taking and will be in line with its recommendations. Such a vote will support the health of the lake, all things living in it, around it, and downstream from it. This includes plants and animals, microorganisms, and folks.

—Bonner McAllester



Candidate Statement

Town Clerk—MaryPaul Yates

I am a candidate for the position of town clerk on both the Democratic and Republican slates for the annual town election next month.

I have been a Monterey homeowner since 1998 and a full-time resident for nine years. I am pleased to serve our community as library trustee (since January 2014), as co-director of the Knox Gallery (since 2012), and as chair of the library planning committee (in 2014 and 2015). I have been away from Monterey for a few months, on a visiting teaching opportunity at the University of Georgia, and will be back in Monterey at the beginning of May.

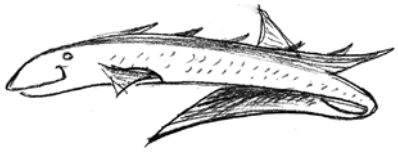
Through my thirty-year-old consulting firm I develop product and marketing plans for interior furnishings manufacturers and distributors. I have extensive experience developing business plans. I manage and follow up multiple projects, and collaborate comfortably with a wide array of personalities at many levels within organizations. My career has required that I master extensive technical data, understand performance codes, regulations, and standards, and their appropriate applicability. Therefore, I believe I have the skills required for the clerk's position.

I am well able to dedicate the necessary time to this job as I am scaling down my consultancies. I would anticipate holding regular office hours on Saturday and on a weekday, and would be readily available by phone. I would enjoy learning more about the legal requirements for our town's accountability to the state requirements through workshops offered by the Massachusetts and the New England Associations of Town Clerks.

Monterey is a very special place, and I aim to contribute towards its continued growth and success.

Thank you for your consideration, and your support.

—MaryPaul Yates
Griswold Road



Hume New England
Planning Board Site Plan Review

To the Planning Board,

We respectfully urge you to consider the following during your site plan review for Hume New England's proposed second expansion, which includes a new over-13,000 sq. ft. eighty-bed lodge and a new 7500 sq. ft. multi-purpose building, as they seek to increase to five hundred campers and expanded programming. We have no objection to their beliefs. But such a large camp, bringing so many vehicles on a narrow, steep dirt road, possibly year-round, has created a dangerous situation that will only get worse with the proposed expansion.

If a non-religious camp was attempting to expand to this extent, in this location, the likely response from the town would already have been an emphatic "No." Special permit requirements normally allow Monterey to assess whether the adverse effects of the proposed use will outweigh its beneficial impacts to the town or the neighborhood, including consideration of the following: "1. Social, economic, or community needs which are served by the proposal; 2. Traffic flow and safety, including parking and loading; 3. Adequacy of utilities and other public services; 4. Neighborhood character and social structures; 5. Impacts on the natural environment; and 6. Potential fiscal impact, including impact on town services, tax base, and employment" (excerpt from Monterey Special Permit by-law).

It is precisely because Hume is exempt, due to its religious status, from the normal Special Permit requirement for camps that site plan review is so significant.

Hume New England is a very different kind of camp than Keswick, the small Christian camp previously in this location. Hume is a large corporate organization with multiple locations, with headquarters in California, and despite many friendly and well-meaning employees, a poor understanding of its new neighborhood. From day one of Camp Hume programming, amplified noise emanating from loudspeakers at the camp increased tenfold, as did the traffic from oversized construction vehicles and Sysco delivery trucks, on roads that were never meant for vehicles of this size. In the last couple of years there have been several incidents involving cars and trucks connected with the camp activity. With increased traffic, it is only a matter of time before someone is seriously injured. In addition, Hume pays no taxes and has expressed little interest in contributing to the improvement of a more suitable access road.

In light of Hume's current application and more distant future plans for yet additional lodges, as well as an RV park, we hope the planning board will use every ounce of its abilities to serve and protect the people who live near the camp and who are simply concerned about protecting their property values, their right to the quiet enjoyment of their homes, and their families' safety.

The planning board must take very seriously that this is the *only* opportunity the town has to assess the impact this camp expansion will have on the abutters and other neighbors, and the board is entrusted with the responsibility to reasonably guide the rate and direction further development will take. In the interest of health and safety, the planning board can and should request the applicant to provide a professional traffic and road study that fully explores the impact camp growth will have on narrow back roads, and properly explores the options for a safer alternative access.

—Bettina Schwartz & Mark Firth
Alan & Jackie Roland
Cos & Margery Spagnoletti
Jon & Linda Schweitzer
Chestnut Hill Road

Michael Vatis & Mary Claire Hogan
Karen Allen
Bella August & Belvin Williams
George Packer & Laura Secor
Marshal Messer & Becky Saletan
Cronk Road

I love Monterey and I love my home. I am publishing my letter to the planning board, with the support of most of my neighbors, because I wanted to share what has been going on in our neck of the woods. The outcome of this situation has the potential to set a precedent for how the town handles all kinds of future proposals. —Bettina

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Free Screening of a documentary film
on the Syrian refugee crisis
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Much Ado About Nothing?

Town Clerk and Treasurer—elected or appointed? Read the report of the special town meeting, pages 2 and 3; letters below from Hillel Maximon and Barbara Swann; and the select board statement on page 30.

Maureen Banner

Maureen Banner

At the special town meeting on March 12: Above-Ray Tryon and Hillel Maximon Right- Barbara Swann making a point.

At present, the Monterey Town Clerk position is an elected position. Last month, the townspeople voted at a special town meeting to change our laws, making it an appointed position. A similar vote passed in a special town meeting last year to make the town treasurer an appointed position. The only thing left to make these irreversible changes permanent is the townspeople's votes during the upcoming annual elections.

The select board already appoints the chief of police, the administrative assistant, and the town administrator, to name a few. One might say that they should be able to appoint everyone who works for the town. After all, what is at stake here? Monterey is a small rural town with less than one thousand inhabitants, an annual budget of approximately four million dollars, limited access to high-speed internet, and spotty cell service. Is this much ado about nothing?

We have, in our federal government, a system of "checks and balances"—a framework to protect us from the rise of a totalitarian state. I am confident that we are not facing totalitarianism in our town, but I wonder if by voting for these changes, we aren't ceding too much control and granting too much power to too few elected officials.

In other words, if the select board is granted the powers that it is requesting, my concern is that the townspeople might lose the balance of power that the present system affords us. Then the town treasurer and town clerk would be "at-will" employees—answerable only to the select board and any other authorized appointee entrusted by the board.

As I ponder the consequences of such changes, I envisage a number of hypothetical instances that would call into question the wisdom of such changes.

Imagine, if you would, that the members of the select board authorized spending of our town funds without our approval. Would you want to know about that? Would you want to bring them to task? Neither the accountant nor the treasurer might be apt to—because if they reported it, they might risk their livelihoods.

Imagine, further, that the board has its preferences as to which police officers the chief of police hires. Who should know better about the qualifications of a police officer, the board or the chief?

As unlikely as it might seem, what if a select board member embezzled funds from a local organization that benefits the people of Monterey? Would you want to know about that? Who would be able to bring such a person to justice?

Finally, as far-fetched as it might sound, with all of this power in the hands of a few, the very record of what transpires in public meetings is vulnerable to recording biases. How would we as townspeople ever be assured that what was said is what was written in the record?

There are those that would argue that the electorate does not know enough to elect the best candidate for the job—and that is why these need to be appointed officials. But why should we assume that an elected board member has any greater ability or insight than the townspeople—especially since they are one of us?

Each year we elect a new board member for a three-year term. If we vote to make the change that the present board wants, we risk the possibility that each year, the new board would appoint a new town treasurer and a new town clerk. What we would lose as townspeople is the knowledge that comes with longevity and experience.

Much ado about nothing? Hardly. I will vote against both changes during the upcoming annual elections—because I think it is in the town's and the townspeople's best interest not to have all the power concentrated in the hands of a few.

—Hillel M. Maximon
Monterey, MA

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P.O. Box 9
Elected or Appointed

The town clerk's position and the treasurer's position in town government will be on the ballot—each on it twice—on May 9, the Tuesday after town meeting, when the town election is held. We need to get the word out to our neighbors and Monterey voters that while the treasurer's post is only a one-year term now, both the clerk and the treasurer posts must be voted on once again—first, because we have candidates and secondly, because each position requires a separate ballot question asking "yes or no" as to whether they be appointed or remain elective. This is a major, important, fact.

Folks already think the treasurer's post is out of their hands. It isn't. They think the town clerk vote in the recent March special town meeting caused it, too, to be appointive. However, Massachusetts General Law (MGL) guarantees all of us another vote because this is a very important step for any town. The legislature was well aware that more people pay attention to and vote in a town election than in mid-winter special town meetings.

This town is being pushed hard by hard politics. We do have good candidates this year who are running for both these posts. They are voters and residents of Monterey. Traditionally, the majority in Monterey has preferred to keep these offices elective. Somehow we need to get the word out that Massachusetts legislation both allows for and demands yet another chance at having each voter's vote count for appointment or election of each of these offices. The majority of special town meeting voters a year ago in February thought it better to keep posts elective and held by fellow residents. Last October the push was on to make the treasurer a one year post and to make it appointive. Special town meetings have repeatedly been devoted to this issue by the select board and others.

The recent special town meeting in early March focused on the position of town clerk. However, I believe many voters here share my belief that elected officials should be directly accountable to townspeople as even novices demonstrate their willingness to learn the ropes and contribute to the betterment of government and should not be totally subservient to the will and favor of a few other persons equally elected.

To give a quick example of the quagmire we almost fell into because the MA general law is geared toward elective and not appointive treasurers and town clerks: This election season we had to pull back from retirement our two remaining registrars—whose terms were up or close to finishing, but who have to serve "until their successors are qualified." MA general law is specific that they have a role in certification of nominees for the town ballot and that they be voters in the town. Were it not for the legislature allowing for probable lack of knowledge of how elections actually work vis-à-vis the office of town clerk (who is normally clerk to the board of registrars in the Commonwealth), we might have indeed had no candidates for office qualified for the ballot. Hard politics indeed.

—Barbara Swann

Council on Aging

The Monterey Council on Aging's role is to assist seniors and others in maintaining a healthy, safe, and social life. Identifying people's needs is part of that, as well as their wishes and ideas. Planning to meet these goals, and implementation, requires support and more. Fiscal support comes from the commonwealth and the town. "More" refers to volunteers and participants. Think about it. Come to our meetings, lunches, exercise, trips, and classes. Laughter is often available.

How was your winter? Did you worry about falling in the snow? Do you know someone who did? Matter of Balance is a free program that addresses these concerns. Ten of us completed the eight sessions. The program will be available again in May/June or July/August, once a week for eight weeks.

Mount Everett Culinary program offers lunch most Wednesdays at the school. Monterey seniors are expected on May 10. A $5 fee to the council before May 1 reserves your seat. Their holiday luncheon was outstanding!

On a Sunday evening in July the Pittsfield Suns will be playing in Wahconah Park and we'll travel up for a game and a picnic. Details soon.

—Kay Purcell

From the Meetinghouse
Hopping Down the Bunny Trail

T. S. Eliot calls April the cruelest month. For me, it's also full of Beatrix Potter memories. Those include a white, pink-eyed bunny in a Manhattan pet store window; a western New York meadow nest, full of soft, earth-brown, baby bunnies; the freedom to eat chocolate again after my childhood Lenten fasts. They all delighted me as much as Potter's watercolors and Peter Rabbit tales.

But those pastel-colored moments also have deep roots in pre-Judeo-Christian Middle Eastern history. Christian tradition dates the Easter feast according to the movement of the moon. The local traditional cultures set the dates for their feast days the same way, long before, and well after, the arrival of the Hebrew people.

In this system, Easter always falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon in spring. Suppose, on our current calendar, that March 20 is a full moon day. Then Easter can come as early as March 21. This year's celebration is on April 16. That's about as late in the year as it gets.

And, of course, I'm only talking about the date for the Western Christian celebration. According to Father Jon Magoulias, parish priest at The Church of the Annunciation in Modesto, California, Greek Orthodox Christians follow an older calendar than the one we use. And they believe that Easter has to come after Passover, to keep true to Biblical understanding of the Passion of Christ. This year, the two dates are the same but they won't coincide again until 2034.

Mary Kate Jordan

Even without this bunny tree ornament, this is the time of year when my childhood memories start to sing, Here comes Peter Cottontail…

Our current calendar has an additional way of messing with ways we celebrate Easter. Depending on the date, sunrise services happen in Daylight Savings time, or not. When Easter comes a few weeks earlier than this year, right after the Saturday we make our clocks "spring forward," sunrise services are downright chilly in these Berkshire hills!

This late in the season, the outdoor temperature is likely to be comfortable for sunrise services, Easter egg hunts, and Easter parades. Whether it will be a day of April showers, or sunshine, still remains to be seen.

But one thing is sure, for those of us in the pews in the church across the street from the General Store. In the weeks before Easter, as well as in December, Liz finds new ways to remind us of something both hard and beautiful. For us, a strong thread unites Christmas and Easter. Without the birth at Christmas, there would be no Easter celebration, as we know it. Without that Easter celebration, we wouldn't celebrate the birth. In other words, we can't have the one without the other.

A Buddhist concept called interbeing also ties life's mixed, sometimes confusing, moments into one message. According to interbeing, we do not develop the "self" we each call "me" in isolation, or at the hand of some capricious fate. We are as we are, as a result of our choices, and as a continuation of the choices made by both our blood ancestors and our spiritual ancestors. Interbeing takes into consideration the influence we feel from, and imprint on, our environment, too. In this world view, we're a combination of nature, nurture, and whatever-you-choose-to-call-the-force-that-fuels-the-larger-picture-we-call-the-cosmos. Even if that name is the cosmos itself.

In our local corner of the cosmos, the woods, the meadows, the plants, and the creatures are all starting to wake up. A lot of us are outdoors, too, waking up along with them. However each of us celebrates this new flow of vitality from within our own traditions, may we all inter-be in our wishes for the welfare of ourselves, and each other. May we, our ancestors, and our environment, be happy, healthy, and at peace. No matter what day it is.

—Mary Kate Jordan

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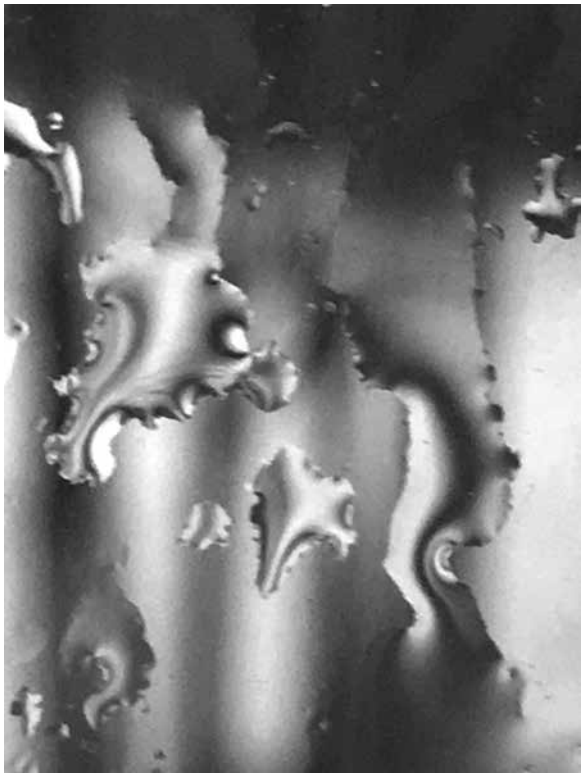
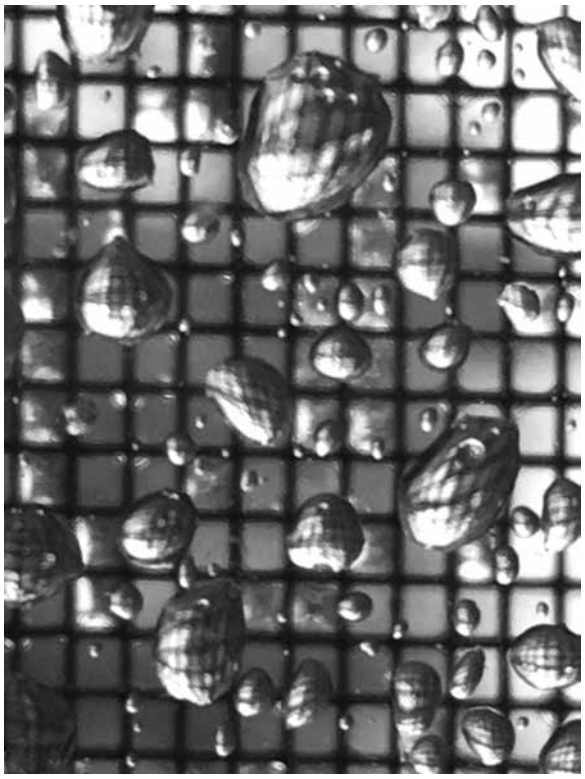
Swelling the roar of waterfall.
Wet moments of exultation gently innumberable
Water, lifeblood of God.
Rain rhythm release
Nature's soothing spiritual immersion
Liquid caress (liquidy caressingly down)





Water images by Bonsai Cox

Fall, rain, beat your infinity of drumlets
Upon my veins and reins and lawn
(like babies' smiles).
Feed me fluid cool warm
Universal solvent form.
Be not polluted but strong wild pure ours
Unadulterated unfaulted.
Cherished cascade of soul, substance, shine
Ecstasy of the Parched, rain Rain.

—Laura Chirico
May, 1992

Knox Gallery April News

Our current exhibit, *Arriving Where We Started: Portraits of a Family and Friends*, Marc Simmons' and Dorene Beller's paintings, will be on view for most of this month at the Knox Gallery. If you haven't yet, please take a look at these two artists' refreshingly nostalgic, colorful paintings.

Both of these self-taught, lifelong painters were finally able to pursue their passions after retirement. When Beller was beginning to embark on her painting full-time, she was struck by the charm and simplicity of some old black-and-white photos of her family, and these continue to inspire her. Simmons has always been drawn to portraiture, and he continues to explore the human face and the spirit it evokes.

Please see the March 2017 *Monterey News* for more information on these artists.

Color Prints by Joan Dix Blair

We look forward to an exhibit of work by Williamstown resident and printmaker, Joan Dix Blair, which will open on April 28, 2017, with an artist's talk the next week, on Friday, May 5, at 5:30 p.m. The talk will be followed by a reception from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Living in the Berkshires is a catalyst for Blair's artwork. "The beauty of the landscape gives me a sense of place, both in my life and in my prints," she says. Her talk will be quite informative, as she will point out and describe the different printmaking mediums exhibited, including monotype, etching, drypoint, and woodcut. She will bring plates that she has printed from as examples.

Please mark your calendars for this opening on May 5, the evening before the annual town meeting, and look for more details in the May issue of the *Monterey News*.

All exhibits can be viewed during library hours. Knox Gallery, Monterey Library, MontereyMassLibrary.org/knox-gallery/

452 Main Road, Monterey, MA, 413-528-3795. Facebook.com/Knox Gallery. @Knox_Gallery on Twitter.

—MaryPaul Yates

Claire © *Marc Simmons*

Flora Dora Baby © *Dorene Beller*

Library News

Egg Hunt

Mark your calendars! On Sunday, April 16, at 1:00 p.m.—sharp, children up to age twelve are invited to hunt for hundreds of eggs. This is sponsored by the Monterey Coffee Club and the Friends of the Monterey Library. Don't be late—there are few things children do faster than find those eggs, and it is usually over in a matter of minutes.

Open House

The library trustees cordially invite everyone to an open house to explain the warrant article concerning the library building project on Saturday, April 22, from 10:30 a.m. to noon. This is an informal session to explain why the article is written as it is and answer your questions so you can be an informed voter. The Friends of the Library will provide refreshments. Please bring your questions, concerns, and comments.

Book Group

On Monday, April 24, at 7:30 p.m., the adult book discussion group will discuss *Hillbilly Elegy*, by J. D. Vance. All are welcome to join them. They are always open to new members and suggestions for good reads.

New Access App

Finally, the library, through CWMARS, has an app to fit both Android and Apple products. Instructions and links are available on the library website, or just go to the Google play store or Apple app store, and search for C/W MARS. Once you have downloaded it you have the option of picking a home library. Choose Monterey and you will be able to renew items, place holds, search databases, check our hours, and even view upcoming events on our calendar! Check out our new logo!

—Mark Makuc
Library Director
MontereyMassLibrary.org

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Tuesday	9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Wednesday	2–5 p.m.
Thursday	4–6 p.m.
Friday	4–8 p.m.
Saturday	9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
	7–9 p.m.

Phone 528-3795

Monterey Library www.montereymasslibrary.org 413-528-3795

Maple Syrup Producers
Pressure to move to Mexico

Rumors, as yet unsubstantiated, reveal that local producers of maple syrup have entered into negotiations with the new administration, which is bent on forestalling a nascent movement to relocate to Mexico. While the producers are reluctant to reveal specific details of an eventual deal, it is widely known that the production of maple syrup requires substantial labor and energy, inputs which can be had at greatly reduced expense south of the border.

The number and identity of local producers is still unknown but sources close to the industry leaders revealed, under conditions of anonymity, that as much as one thousand gallons of syrup, representing upwards of fifty thousand gallons of sap, may be produced annually within Monterey borders, and that while prices of syrup have remained relatively stable over the last few years, the volatility of fuel prices and difficulty of finding workers for the short season have made a move to Mexico increasingly attractive.

Asked about the rumors of ongoing negotiations with the White House, producer Roger Tryon would neither confirm nor deny the possibility of moving his operation, but let it slip that it would be much easier to do the arduous work in a warm climate. Steve Snyder, representing Gould Farm's syrup production, noted that their recently decommissioned oil burning evaporator could be brought back online with the price of subsidized fuel found in other parts of the world. Snyder commented, "I heard that in Venezuela you could get fuel oil at 25 cents a gallon. Heck, we might even move to Kuwait where the oil just comes out of the ground."

One concerned local resident, interviewed on the street, thought such an exodus would be a great loss to the community but could understand the producers' plight, observing that one well known producer wouldn't even have to change their labels if they moved to Monterey, Mexico.

Despite the tight security regarding the details of the negotiations, it is generally believed by those close to the industry that the new administration is going to have to reach hard if they want to sweeten the pot enough to make these producers willing to stay.

—Monterey Chapter,
Sticky Sappers Society
"Sweat for Sweet"

Transfer Station News

Well, here we are winding down the month of March. After a mostly tranquil February, March was anything but. With cold winds and then almost two feet of snow, was a real challenge.

The two most-asked questions recently have been, "When is the new transfer station going to open?" and, "How is Ben doing?"

As to the first question: After a meeting in early February it was decided to wait until spring. It just didn't seem like a good idea to try and fight the weather. We invite everyone to our open house on April 22. Lots to see and new programs to learn about.

As for Ben, it's a good news/bad news situation. For the last few months it seems like he has been fighting one infection after another—first in one leg, then in the other. He is now going through intensive antibiotic treatments to which he seems to be responding well. He will be out of work for at least another month and is bored to death. I thought some of the town's well-wishers might like to send him a get well card to help cheer him up. You can write to him at Ben Pac, 4 Summit Avenue, Huntington, MA 01050. I'm sure he would love to hear from you.

—Beth and Dave

Transfer Station Summer Hours

Sunday	10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Wednesday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.

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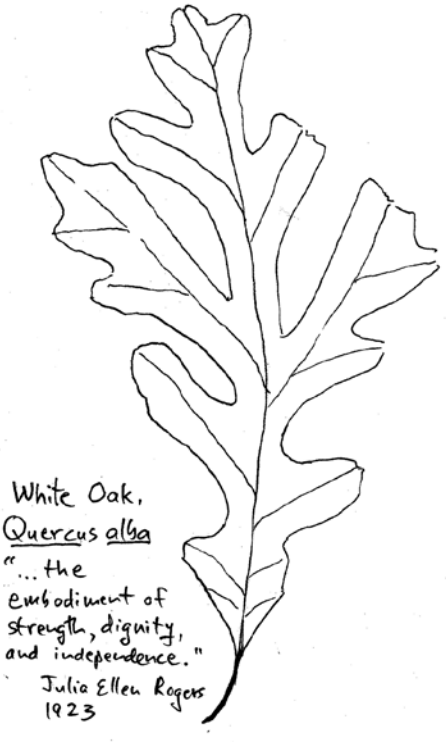
Acorns and Mighty Oaks,
Ancient Celts and their Mice

There is a fine book, *Mammal Tracks and Signs*, by Mark Elbroch (Stackpole Books, 2003). Its subtitle is *A Guide to North American Species*, and I appreciate the decision not to call it a "field guide." You could carry it into the field with you, but nowadays no one would. Most explorers are equipped with some sort of pocket-sized camera, making it easy to collect a photo of a treasure and carry it home to the book, which in this case is a 778-page paperback weighing two and a half pounds. The book is enriched with the author's photos and drawings, also his prose texts and teachings. I am lucky to have it standing among the guides and field guides in my bookcase. In this house, we go to it often.

Most recently I trotted over for Elbroch's book when Maureen Banner sent me her clear and handsome photos of a nibbled acorn. (See the Wildlife Report, page 28). This was the beginning of a grand tour for me, a trip in all directions, along with Maureen, to figure out all we could about the story behind this photo.

First, who has been nibbling on it, with such tiny teeth, raking off mouthfuls of acorn? There is a section in the book on acorns. I already knew this was a red oak acorn, and thanks to Elbroch and others, I know who eats these: bears, porcupines, deer, mice, flying squirrels, hogs, and fishers, also many birds, and some insects. Some people eat them, too. Indigenous people relied upon them and developed ways to wash out the bitter tannins found in all acorns, but especially those of the red oaks. We have white oaks, too, in these parts, whose acorns are considered to be sweeter, less full of tannins. Even so, biologist Bernd Heinrich boiled these white oak acorns eight times, starting over with fresh water each time, and could not love the results.



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Years back my dad took on acorn-flour production with our daughters, following accounts of Indigenous peoples' processes. This entailed grinding the acorns first, then rinsing them in fresh water for a long time. The flour looked good, and the kids proudly brought home a half-jar of it, for us to use at home. It wasn't enough for a whole loaf of bread, and we hated to dilute it with wheat or cornmeal. We tried it neat and found it something to be treasured forever, back in its jar.

Elbroch advises us to figure out whether a nibbled acorn has been eaten green, or after storage. He points out that white oak acorns germinate soon after falling, so the mice and squirrels eat them right on the spot, rather than storing them somewhere. They don't keep, in other words. Red oak acorns take two years to form on the tree, come down in September or October, and don't germinate until spring. By the shape of the shell in Maureen's photo, also the leaf in the background, I take this to be a red oak. It has not germinated. It may have been nibbled just yesterday, and maybe by a mouse. Mice, chipmunks, and other rodents use the lower jaw to steady the nut and the upper one to scrape away or nibble at it. This leaves a telltale notch from the lower incisors if the nut is still partly in the shell. These marks on the shell are called "chatter." If the acorn was eaten by a nuthatch or a jay, there may be some peck marks on the shell, but there will not be chatter.

If the mouse or chipmunk or squirrel got all the shell off and then started eating, or if the nut was not green, but a bit dry and had shrunk inside the shell so that it came loose easily, then there would be no chatter on the shell. I let our butternuts sit all winter before trying to get them out with a cracker. They loosen a little, get easier to pick out, and are still fresh and good. There's no chatter, no need to grip the shell with my lower jaw.

Here are nut numbers, gathered somehow by Richard Ketchum and described in a book by R. Rupp (*Red Oaks and Black Birches*, Storey Communications, 1990.) Elbroch recounts this in his chapter on acorns. Ketchum *tracked* 15,000 acorns produced by one tree, which is amazing in itself. He found that 83% of these were harvested by mammals, and 6% by

insects. 10% were naturally defective, and less than 1% sprouted. Half of these died while still seedlings.

Many mammals ate well, thanks to this tree. Only a few little oaks started along afterwards. It takes at least twenty years for an oak to mature and start making acorns. These are the numbers, and they illustrate a system that works well, like so much else all around us in the woods.

Growing up in Connecticut, we learned in school about the Charter Oak in Hartford, said to be one thousand years old when it went down in a storm in 1856. It was the hiding place of Connecticut's Royal Charter of 1662, hidden so a new English governor general would not find and confiscate it. The charter, originally from Charles II, let the colony make some of its own rules, and elect officials. When Charles died, the next king wanted all the royal charters back, but the Connecticut charter stayed safe in its oak. After the tree went down centuries later, scions were collected, and young trees started from this one. These are said to thrive still in Hartford and other towns. Also, the governor's desk is made of boards from the great Charter Oak.

This Connecticut legend and the nibble marks on a Monterey acorn come together today thanks to a mighty tree, and to its marvelous nut. Ancient Celts worshipped the oak, as did the Celtic mice. Every time any of us eat, we are taking communion with the land, with all who dwell and breathe here and ever did. You, me, the druids, my dad, and the mouse that nibbled the Banner acorn.

—Bonner McAllester

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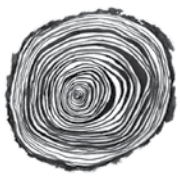
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Bidwell House Museum
Happy Spring

The bright spring equinox sun is shining on a snowy landscape up here on Art School Road, hinting at warmth to come as the nights still hover in the teens. Did anyone else see a wild wind swoop by on February 25? It toppled some trees and blew stuff around on the museum grounds, but luckily no buildings were hit. The restoration work is continuing well on the 1760s homestead. We can't wait to show it to you.

Please—become a member of your museum and historic site this year. Members are the most important stewards of Monterey's historic house. Memberships help fund the education programs for young children, youth, and adults, and members make the maintenance of the trails on the 192-acre property possible.

Membership privileges include unlimited free house tours, the Bidwell newsletter, a 30% discount on program tickets, and invitations to all events. Won't you renew your membership or become a new steward of the Bidwell House Museum this year?

Current members and donors will be receiving a membership invitation soon. You can also go to the museum's website at bidwellhousemuseum.org. Should you have trouble with the website, please give a call at 528-6888. Thank you for your support.

—Barbara Palmer
Executive Director

Having a Good Day

When a severe windstorm crashes through the area knocking trees all akimbo, but they miss your house.

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Monterey Police Report
Mid-February to Mid-March

Note: The most frequent comment I receive as editor is from readers who miss the police report. It stopped before my time with the paper, but Chief Backhaus has agreed to resume sending the report, which in its original form, is a public document given to the select board. Enjoy, and appreciate the police department for their efforts.—Editor

Loud Noises in the Night

March 18: Officer responded to reported fireworks on Laurel Banks Lane. Fireworks were set off in the officer's presence. Owner of the property advised that fireworks are illegal in MA. Fireworks were turned over to officer.

March 19: Officer responded at 12:20 a.m. to reported gun shots or fireworks on Sylvan Road. Officer stayed in the area for almost an hour and did not hear or see anything.

March 19: Officer responded at 10:10 p.m. to complaint of someone shooting a gun. Party advised that it is coyote season and hunters can hunt until midnight. Officer stayed in the area, but did not hear any shooting.

February 25 Windstorm

Multiple calls were received for trees down that blocked roads and damaged power lines. Officers responded to calls on Tyringham Road, Sandisfield Road, Hupi Road, Art School Road, Beartown Mountain Road, Brett Road, Blue Hill Road, New Marlboro Road. The town highway department and National Grid were kept busy clearing the roads and removing hazards.

During the following week there were two more calls for trees on live wires on Art School Road and down across Camp Half Moon Road. Officers responded, made calls for support, and closed roads as necessary.

Winter Accidents

March 8: Officer responded to a single vehicle accident on Gould Road, near the new transfer station. The vehicle started to slide off the right side of the road due to the ice, caused by the light rain. The driver then went to apply the brakes and stepped on the accelerator instead, his vehicle went up the embankment and rolled over. He was not hurt and refused transportation.

March 17: Officer responded to a single car motor vehicle accident on Mt. Hunger Road, car into a tree. Operator reported no injuries. Vehicle towed.

Curious Animals

March 9 and 10: Two loose cows on Main Road near Fairview Road, and then the next day four loose cows in the same area. (If, on the following day, there had been eight loose cows, mathematicians would say this indicates a powers-of-two progression. As this would be dire for traffic throughout the area, it is fortunate that this did not occur.)

Officers also responded to loose dogs on Pixley and Brett Roads. Perhaps they'd heard about the cows.

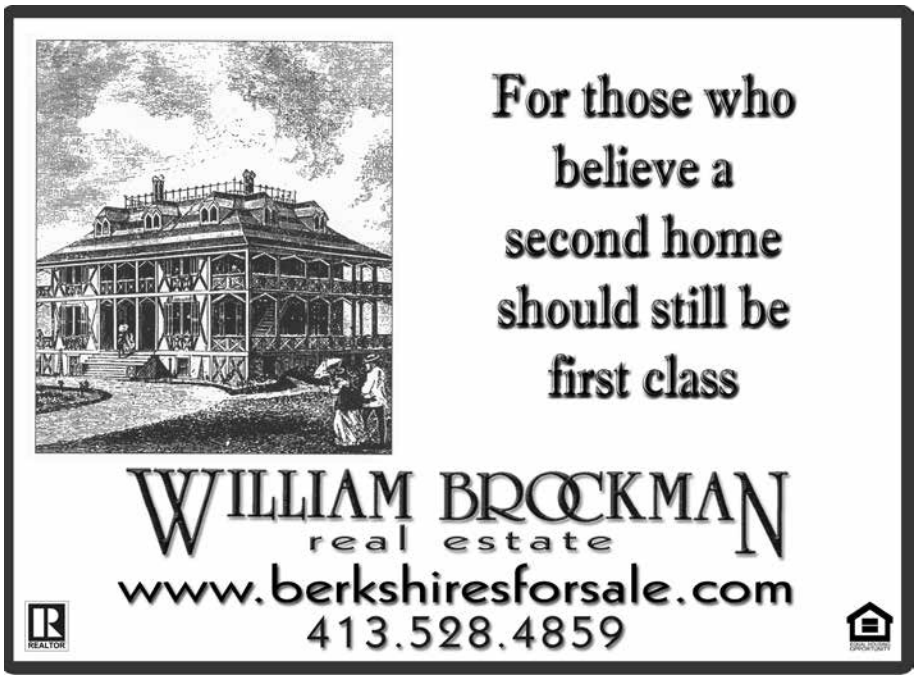
Ice Hazards

February 24: Officer received a call reporting that someone had fallen through the ice. Officer responded to the area of the boat launch and located the party in the water and advised dispatch. Dispatch advised MFD and they responded shortly. Party was rescued from the water and put in the ambulance to warm up and be checked out.

March 18: Officer responded to a report of young children on the thin ice. Two adults and one child located ice fishing on stable ice.

Alarms, Vehicles, and Miscellaneous

Officers responded to one false smoke alarm, four medical calls, four security alarm calls that were secure or in error, four wellness checks, one fire call, a suspicious vehicle call, one mutual aid call for disabled automobile near the town line, and one speeder without a license.



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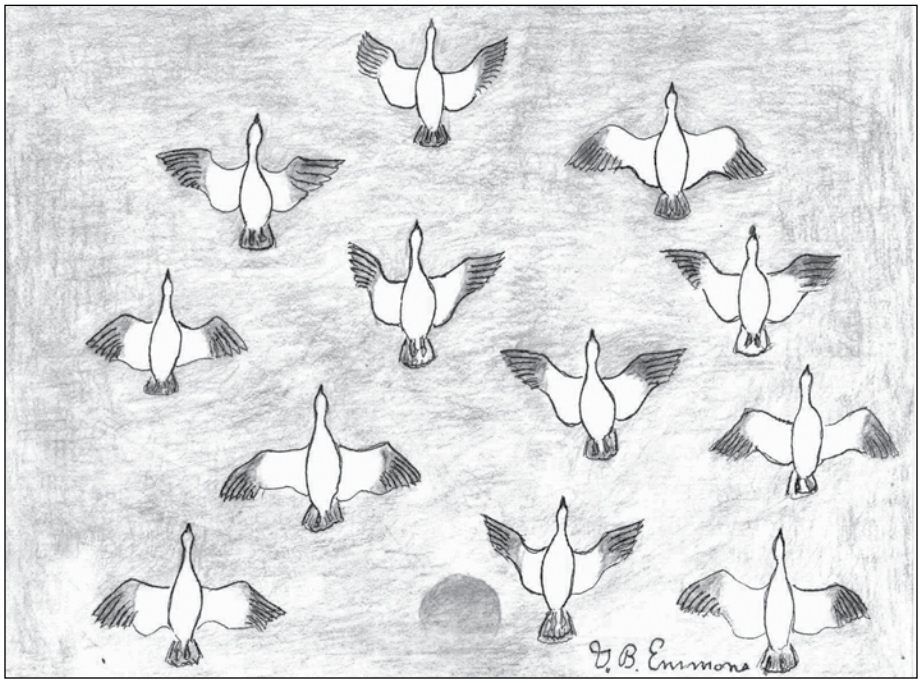
A Forecast Of Snow Geese



The snow goose is a white-bodied goose with black wingtips and tail feathers barely visible on the ground but noticeable in flight. Usually, they are more often heard before seen, with a shrill cacophony of honking much higher up, and with more rapid wingbeats than their Canada goose cousins. They do not like to travel without the company of another dozen or so geese and several years ago just such a small flock landed in a Gould Farm field along Curtis Road. The same field somehow annually attracts flocks of snow buntings whose whirling, aerial performances were well described in Bonner's March wildlife column.

By early March snow geese had already been sighted over Pennsylvania headed this way north toward their coastal Canadian breeding grounds. Much more plentiful in recent years, their movements along flyways can gather flocks of hundreds and even thousands. Flocks like these were recorded years ago over the Housatonic River valley watershed. If you are lucky enough to watch one of these flights swirl down from the sky, it has been described as like standing in a snow globe as they blanket the ground in the white-out of a sudden blizzard.

Snow geese are closely related to the blue goose species by a common morph controlled by a single gene. White geese in a single generation can start turning to blue, and now are equal in numbers to their white cousins everywhere. This is different than the seasonal adaptation to camouflage with oncoming winter snow that is observed in the change in appearance by the ptarmigan, the ermine weasel, and Arctic fox.

Native Americans frequently read into this white wonder-of-it-all with their inherent interpretation of spiritual coincidence, such as the appearance of one white buffalo once every one hundred years. It was a more meaningful event than the common albino pigment deficiency. Instead, it was a genetic roll of the dice, and a sacred omen of good fortune for the immediate future, which was associated with experiences in their history. One year, one such buffalo appeared in Bowler, Wisconsin, bringing good fortune during the year that the Mohicans, who had been forcefully migrated there from Stockbridge, won a license to open their North Star Casino. This greatly improved the economics of their lifestyle. While it may seem to be a superstitious stretch of circumstance to you and me, perhaps it would be interpreted differently if we were one of the lucky beneficiaries.

How wonderful for each of us is the world of nature when the shrill clarion of a lofty flock of snow geese breaks the chilled stillness of the pale blue sky of early spring over Lake Garfield. My memory of this heavenly orchestration was as thrilling as hearing the dramatic Hallelujah Chorus of Handel's immortal Messiah. May my forecast of snow geese paint a picture in your mind of an impending beneficial sun-sign on the wings of the vernal equinox just over the horizon.

My best regards to the Monterey Coffee Club.

—George B. Emmons

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State Reps and Select Board
Broad Questions—Part 1

The select board invited Senator Adam Hinds and Representative Smitty Pignatelli to a meeting on March 20 to discuss some questions and concerns that affect Monterey and other small towns in the area and across the state. Initially they scheduled them for separate one-hour time slots, but both Hinds and Pignatelli arrived at 9 a.m., and stayed the full two hours. This made the discussions much more productive, having insights into both houses of the legislature.

As part of their invitation, the board had prepared a list of significant issues. In brief, their list included broadband and cell service; the increasing needs of an aging population; decreased numbers of school- and working-age families; school funding formulas and regional school agreements; the large percentage of untaxed property in town; that state regulations and mandates are ill-suited for small, rural towns; the question of tax breaks for families paying college expenses; and share services between towns.

Remarkably, the two hour time period actually permitted some meaty discussion of most of these issues. Next month part 2 reports on infrastructure, non-taxed lands, and other topics.

Broadband

Cliff Weiss, a member of the broadband committee, gave an overview of the committee's process to date, and said that they were down to two proposals that would bring the most benefits to the town. However, the two potential companies, Fiber Connect and Frontier, have not been qualified by the state to receive the state money. In defense of the state's interest, Pignatelli said that the governor has made it clear that the state wants to invest in projects that will work, and in companies that will have the capability to invest in next generation technology, so that the projects are sustainable.

Pignatelli and Hinds, as two of the five-member western Massachusetts delegation to the legislature, were to meet the following day with the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), which holds the money to be given to the town. Their message will be very direct, reflecting the frustration everyone has about how very long this process has been, and the difficulties the state has presented in moving forward. However, they did say that there seemed to be a more productive attitude at MBI, and were optimistic that MBI, and the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC), of which MBI is a part, will be ready to allow the towns to receive the money to move forward. A representative of MTC has said that he sees a path by which both Fiber Connect and Frontier can be qualified.

Larry Klein raised the possibility that the demographics of the area could change drastically with the availability of high-speed broadband access. It would give towns stronger real estate values, we could find younger families making commitments to our smaller towns, and it might dramatically change the dynamics of many of the problems we currently face.

Cell Service

The board described the current state of cell service in Monterey, including the readiness of a tower company to erect a tower on a site at Hume Camp. Select board member Steven Weisz said that all the permits are in place for construction to begin tomorrow. However, the tower company cannot proceed until they have secured a commitment from Verizon that they will deploy onto the tower. Pignatelli wondered why Verizon hasn't rented a spot on the Blue Hill Road tower that AT&T currently uses.

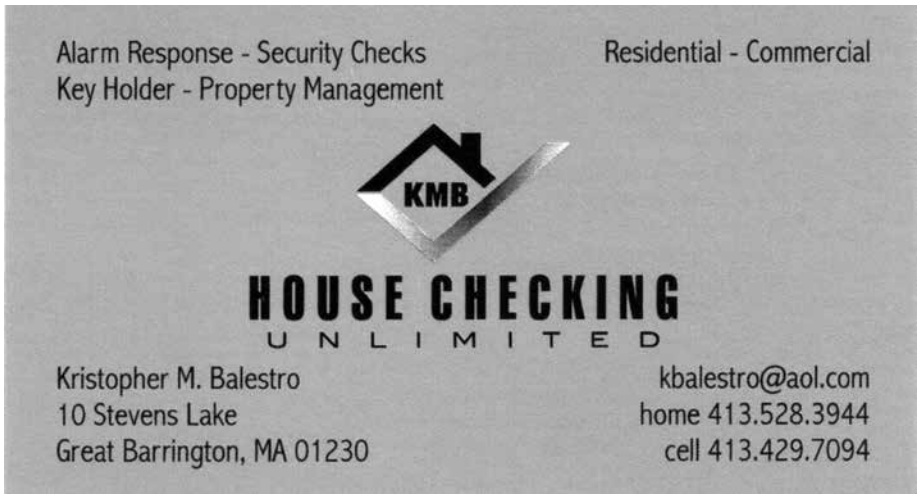
One point of contention has to do with the public safety system in the state. The state authorized Verizon as the only operator of a statewide public safety network used by police and other emergency service providers, yet there are a great many rural towns in the state that have no Verizon cell service access.

Select board chair Kenn Basler told the visitors that he and others will be attending a meeting with the tower company and Verizon next week in Springfield. He invited both Hinds and Pignatelli to join them, and if this was not possible, asked if they would each write letters of support urging Verizon to meet their obligation.

Schools

The school discussion was perhaps the lengthiest. It was clear that Pignatelli has been involved in very similar conversations throughout his district for quite a while. The discussion started with Basler outlining our current situation. He said that we have around eighty school-age children. Fifty-three attend schools in the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD) and thirty choose to go to other schools. Select board member Carol Edelman said that the current survey of Monterey school-age children shows only eight children ages five and under, indicating that there will be fewer and fewer children. At the same time, our assessment to SBRSD increased by $130,000 last year, and is going to increase a similar amount this year.

The lack of sufficient numbers of students is weakening the SBRSD, and making the per-student cost to rise very high.



Hinds described state efforts to study the problem, which boil down to either developing solutions locally, or having the state impose solutions. Pignatelli repeatedly asked the board directly, "What's your solution?" He told the board that seventeen years after the SBRSD was formed, people at the state level admitted that they had inadequately planned for how to finance a regional district. And this statement was over a dozen years ago, and still the state has no idea how to fund a regional district. He also said that many of the "solutions" are really short-term fixes, "band-aids," which allow the underlying problems to continue.

He pointed out that in his experience towns are very willing and motivated to engage in discussions to find solutions, but every town "builds walls around their towns, and their local issues," and that this inhibits finding larger solutions. Towns are fine if other towns change, but not so willing to change themselves.

He added that the state task force will soon deliver a potential template for regional school districts. Both he and Hinds referred to divergent state attempts in Vermont and Maine to the same set of issues; the thorniest of them is transportation needs and costs. He urged local school committees to begin to make decisions for their districts before the state moves to dictate solutions.

Weisz brought up a last school-related point—the clear need to rebuild vocational training opportunities. Stories were shared about younger people with good training and skills having well-paid jobs without having gone to college. Pignatelli said that perhaps one solution to the SBRSD and Berkshire Hills district problems would be to designate part of one of those schools for vocational training, giving students a better choice for their futures.

Next month part 2 will report on the rest of the discussions. Topics included infrastructure and funding, non-taxed lands within Monterey, the possibilities of state tax credits for families paying college tuition, and share services between towns.

—Stephen Moore

Pat Arnow

Monterey Swap Shop Resident Chosen for National Conference

Swap Shop Suzie has been selected to represent Monterey at an upcoming national convention for Reduce-Reuse-Recycle, going as a prime example of the second tenet. There is some question as to whether Washington will be spending money on this convention for promoting the good old three 'Rs.' But she is ready to go, unless someone has fetched her from the Swap Shop to be reused again, which is her mission and her joy in life.

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Monterey Water Company
Centennial in 2017

The Monterey Water Company, Inc. came into legal existence by an act of the Massachusetts legislature in 1917. The MWC is a private company run cooperatively by and for the benefit of its member/users. It is not owned or run by the town government. There are seventy properties attached to the system that delivers water pumped from a well into storage tanks located off of Sandisfield Road. Water is then gravity-fed into the village.

For federal tax purposes the MWC is a qualified 501C12 Public Benefit Corporation. Accordingly, no federal income taxes are paid. By Massachusetts law however, the MWC is a taxable corporation subject to corporate tax and town property tax, both real and personal. The annual budget of approximately $30,000 is shared equally by an assessment on each member. The annual cost is a little over $400 per member.

The MWC is classified as a municipal water company and as such is subject to strict health and safety oversight by the Department of Environmental Resources. Our licensed plant operator, Mark Makuc, oversees the system. The management of the company is the responsibility of a volunteer board of directors made up of member users.

Shawn Tryon and Keith Amstead during the installation of the two 10,000 gallon storage tanks above the Monterey Water Company's pumphouse off Sandisfield Road.

Many of the municipal water companies in the county are owned by the towns they serve. Most receive subsidies from general appropriations when the user fees don't cover all of their costs. In those towns, residents who don't get the use of the water supply are paying for others who do. This is an aggravation that Monterey residents with private wells don't have to face.

In 2004, the system was upgraded with a new pumphouse and water tanks. All of the land and equipment of the company were pledged to a mortgage of $125,000. Additionally, $25,000 was spent from the company's reserves. This investment has positioned the MWC to be able to serve the village well for many years. There are weaknesses however. All the water comes from one well and one pump. If either were to fail we would be in serious trouble. Water pumps burn out and wells run dry if they are overtaxed. The served properties would be unusable without water. The way this water source is protected is by the daily monitoring of the system and usage, careful maintenance of equipment, and the continued cooperation of the users by conservation of their personal water usage. The members realize that this is a common asset upon which they all depend.

As a historical note, during this year I will be sharing minutes from the early origins of the company. Happy 100th birthday to the Monterey Water Company!

— Steve Pullen

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Community Potluck April 19
Monterey History Project

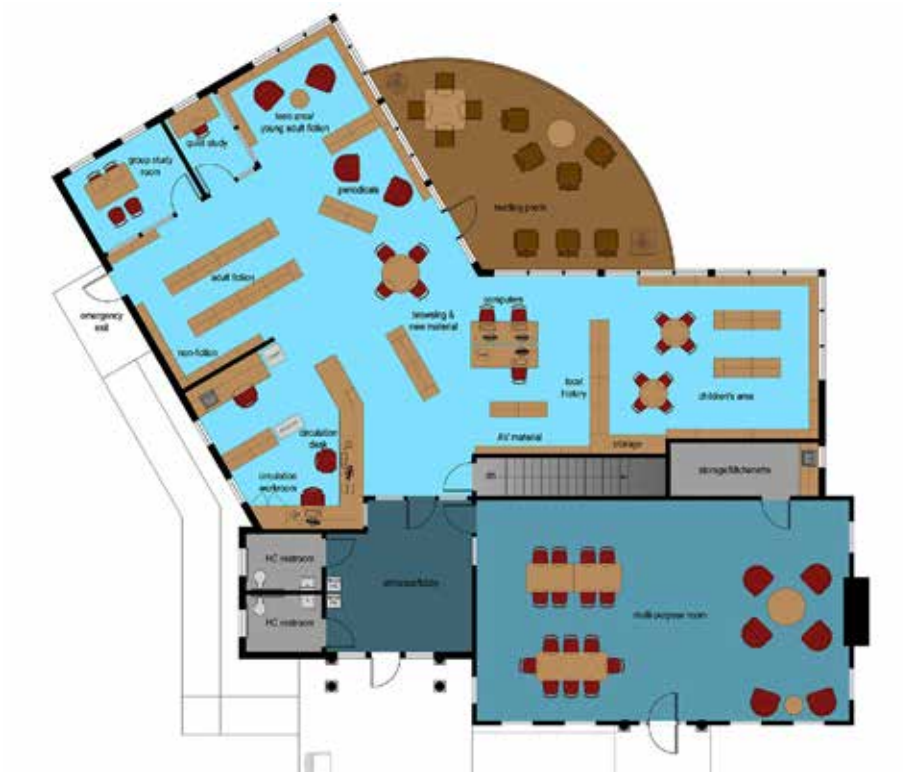
At the March potluck, John and Mary-Anne Grammer gave us a real idea of what life is like for a newly arrived Syrian refugee family, and how even a small commitment of time invested can bring large rewards. Thanks to them for an inspiring evening.

For the April potluck, we have rescheduled Wendy Germain from the canceled January potluck. She will be speaking about the Monterey History Project and showing some film clips. Inspired by the book *Monterey: A Local History 1847 - 1997*, the Monterey History Project was launched last year. The book, edited by Peter Murkett, is filled with townspeople's stories woven together, giving us a glimpse into Monterey's vibrant past. Much has happened here since the book was published to commemorate Monterey's sesquicentennial anniversary. It seemed time to catch up and talk with some of the people who wrote stories for the book.

The project began with Mark Makuc inviting people to come to the library to tell stories about Monterey, with Wendy Germain videotaping. Then the project was expanded to interviewing kids, parents, and elders about their experiences living here. There are now two dozen videos, some of individuals and others of groups talking about the gravity races or the Woodburn farm boys. The videos are currently stored at CTSB TV in Lee, with the goal to archive them on DVDs at the Monterey Library. There will be copies of Peter Murkett's book available for sale for $20, with $10 going to the Friends of the Monterey Library.

The next Monterey Community Potluck Dinner will be held on Wednesday, April 19, at 6 p.m., at the Monterey Meetinghouse. Please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil and a place setting and silverware for yourself. Everyone is welcome.

—Kyle Pierce



The proposed interior plan for the library renovation and expansion. The gallery space would be relocated to the current main room of the existing library. See pages 6 and 7 for other images of the proposed expansion, and details of the next steps.

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Wildlife Report
Mid-February to Mid-March

In February Stephanie Grotz had a wild dog relative visiting her porch, leaving tracks in the snow. She sent a photo. We don't know which dog cousin this was. Then in early March, which was quite spring-like at the time, folks driving to a *Monterey News* board meeting saw frogs in the evening on Lake Buel Road, hopping across. Serious winter was in the immediate forecast, so we wondered how the frogs would fare. By the middle of March, still winter, or winter returned, there was an otter tobogganing across the driveway at Cora Baker's place, through the snow. Five days later, there was another otter trail there.

About this time of winter, Ed Salsitz called with remarkable observations involving sixteen turkeys feasting on dropped seeds under his bird feeder on Beartown Mountain Road. Ed saw that the small birds flew off from the feeder when the turkeys arrived. The turkeys stayed for a time, eating, then walked away a certain distance and stopped. At this, the small birds seemed to feel safe again and returned to the feeder, eating and scattering seeds. The turkeys suddenly ran, in a group, back to the place beneath the feeder, now replenished with birdseed! The small birds took off again, but they had served their purpose for these smart turkeys, supplying them with another feast on the ground.

Steve Pullen told of a striking-looking duck he'd seen in the river behind the post office. It was small, very dark, with bold white on the back of the head and on its front and sides. Steve looked it up and found it to be a bufflehead. In the same part of town, Sharon Rosenberg and David Feinberg saw a bald eagle early in March, behind their place just up Tyringham Road from the church. The eagle flew away over the Town Hall.

Maureen Banner took a great close-up photo of an acorn, nibbled all over by a rodent with small sharp teeth. We are betting it was a mouse. See photo, below, also the story on page 20.

Maureen Banner

Also in the middle of March, Kyle Pierce reported robins and a purple finch, in Pittsfield. Here in East Monterey, we had our first cowbirds and red-winged blackbirds coming around at that time. We also had an unusual junco, white-crowned and ring-necked. This bird travelled with a small flock of more conventional-looking juncos, visiting our place for several days.

I heard from Steve Snyder that there have been turkey buzzards (also called turkey vultures) in Monterey, and I saw some myself in Sheffield, wheeling against the sky. Steve also saw a ruffed grouse at the top of Blue Hill Road.

We have Tiegen and Maddox Stucker's March report, sent in by Dominic, their dad:

Maddox and Tiegen Stucker of Blue Hill Road were delighted to observe a barred owl on their property. It landed on a low tree branch some thirty feet away, rested for a couple of minutes, pooped, and flew off silently and majestically through the trees. They also found a porcupine taking up residence in a tall hemlock in their woods. It even walked right past their dining room window one evening. Before the snows descended again, they spied six robins foraging in their yard, three turkey vultures sunning themselves in Sheffield, and an osprey soaring above Bartholomew's Cobble. Later, they saw four turkeys crossing Stony Brook Road, as well as a pheasant ambling into the woods. More recently, on the wooded hill above the fish hatchery in Hartsville, they discovered fifteen oval indentations in the snow where deer had spent the night. On Gould Road, they spotted a red-breasted woodpecker.

Many thanks to all, for tales of the wild. Call or email me at 528-9385, bonnermca@gmail.com.

— Bonner McAllester

Monterey Beekeeping
Workshop Series

April 4: Monterey Congregational Church, 6 to 7:30 p.m., "What are the costs to become a beekeeper?" This includes bees, nucs (a smaller version of a beehive for smaller colonies), hives, fences, and hidden costs, along with the time needed to practice proper management. Opportunities to meet will be provided throughout the season to help you make your decisions. This will be most beneficial for those who want to start in 2018 because of the planning needed, but not too late to start now. Deadline to register is April 3.

April 30: Monterey Community Center, 2 p.m., "Native Pollinators: Introducing mason and leafcutter bees in your gardens and fruit trees." A demonstration of natural, commercial, and handmade nesting materials. We will discuss their biology and life cycle and importance to pollination. Deadline to register is April 29.

Depending on interest, and my own availability, I have several more ideas for monthly workshops, which will be announced in the coming months.

Registration necessary—presentations will only occur if there is enough interest. Contact Russ Wilson at BeesAcrossMassachusetts@gmail.com.

— Russ Wilson

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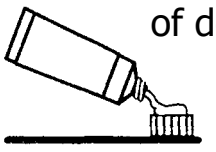

528-6520

Route 23 Monterey

I Am Becoming a Dog

I am becoming a dog.
Happy to be hanging around home,
Walking in the woods,
Going to town in the car to get groceries,
At night lying on the couch watching Netflix.

—Michael Banner

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sat, may 6, 7pm $15
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sat, may 13, 10:30–noon $10
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with jennifer browdy

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Needing Help? Want to Work?

The *Monterey News* will publish a list in the May, June, and July issues of young people (going into high school and older) who would like to work in the area this summer.

If you would like to be included, send an email to MontereyNews9@gmail.com. Include your name, a brief description of the type of work you'd be willing to do (anything, cooking, outside work, cleaning, babysitting, dog walking, etc.), and your phone number. We will not publish ages or email addresses, and you must have parental permission (up to age 18) to have a listing published.

The deadline for being listed is Monday, April 17.

Proud Parents

Jacob Edelman of Monterey has been elected president of the student union at Brandeis University. Jacob served as town reporter for the *Monterey News*, and the features editor at the *Hoot*, the Brandeis student newspaper. He has also been president of the Brandeis Democrats, student union director of academics, undergraduate representative for the legal studies department, representative to the undergraduate curriculum committee, and was a participant in Boys' State Massachusetts. A 2014 graduate with high honors from Lenox Memorial Middle and High School, he is also a proud 2001 graduate of Susan Andersen's Monterey Kindergarten.

—Carol and Jim Edelman

Select Board Corner

Welcome to the Select Board Corner. Our goal is to submit an article each month to the *Monterey News* to keep everyone up to date on important issues, office closings, highway projects, etc. This article may be especially important for those who cannot access our website. This is a work in progress, and we welcome any comments or suggestions on the articles.

MontereyMA.gov

Our town website is a great way to access information about the town.

Meetings and Events

Board of Health: Monday, April 3, at 4 p.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

Chair Yoga: Tuesdays, 9 to 10 a.m.

Conservation Commission: Tuesday, April 11, at 6 p.m.

Council on Aging: Mondays, April 10 and 24, at 10 a.m.

Visiting Nurse: Berkshire VNA will be here on Thursday, April 13, from 2 to 3 p.m. No appointment necessary.

Foot Nurse: Thursday, May 11, 9 to 11:30 a.m., by appointment (please call 528-1443 x247). All ages are welcome.

Parks Commission: Wednesday, April 5, at 6 p.m.

Planning Board: Thursdays, April 13 and 27, at 7 p.m. Please call Maggie Leonard at 528-9685 to be placed on the agenda.

Select Board: Wednesdays, April 5, 12, 19, and 26 at 9 a.m. Please call 528-1443 x111 to be placed on the agenda.

Annual Town Meeting: Saturday, May 6, 9:30 a.m. at the firehouse.

Town Hall Closings

Town Hall will be closed Monday, April 17, for Patriot's Day. Individual office closings are posted on the town calendar and on the department's voicemail message. We recommend always calling ahead.

Other News

Elected to Appointed

At recent special town meetings, residents of Monterey voted in favor of changing the part-time positions of treasurer and clerk from elected to appointed. In accordance with state law, residents must now confirm this, by voting on these as ballot questions at the May 2 town elections. Here are some reasons the select board supports these changes:

We have great appreciation and gratitude for our many fine town employees including Director of Operations Shawn Tryon, Police Chief Gareth Backhaus, Library Director Mark Makuc, Transfer Station Managers Dave Gilmore and Beth Parks, Administrative Assistant Melissa Noe, Head Assessor Don Clawson, current Town Clerk Terry Walker, and numerous other appointed town employees who keep our roads maintained, bills paid, homes safe, library doors open, voters registered, dogs licensed. Please note that these, and many others, are screened, hired, appointed employees.

With all due respect for the elective, democratic process, many town jobs are not about making policy. They are about providing service to residents. The treasurer is a responsible fiscal officer, and the town clerk is a clerical position; each requires organizational skills, training, licensing, and experience. An elected official is not vetted for background, experience, education, or references, and cannot even be required to keep regular office hours.

An elected position drastically limits the pool of applicants. Of course, Monterey residents are always encouraged to apply for, and are often hired for, town positions. But realistically, with our very small population, we can no longer limit our search for qualified individuals when we wish to hire the most skilled and capable employees.

We don't elect local doctors, teachers, plumbers, child care providers, builders. We hire people with specific education, qualifications, and experience to do the best job. Let's vote to confirm changing the positions of town treasurer and town clerk from elected to appointed so we can hire the best people available to serve the residents of Monterey.

— Kenn Basler, Chair
Steve Weisz and Carol Edelman
Monterey Select Board
(kenn@montereyma.gov)
(steve@montereyma.gov)
(carol@montereyma.gov)
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Calendar

Through April 22: Knox Gallery, *Arriving Where We Started* opens. See page 18.

Every Tuesday:

Chair Yoga with Connie Wilson, 9 to 10 a.m., Monterey Town Hall. Free, sponsored by Monterey Parks Commission.

Cards and Games, 12:30, at town hall. Sponsored by the Council on Aging.

Tuesday, April 4: Beekeeping workshop, "Costs to becoming a beekeeper". 6 to 7:30 p.m., church basement. See page 28. Pre-registration.

Monday, April 10: Lake Garfield Working Group, seeking public input. 7 p.m., at town hall. See page 5.

Thursday, April 13: Berkshire VNA blood pressure and wellness clinic, from 2 to 3 p.m. No appointment necessary.

Saturday, April 15: Lenox Contra Dance: Music by Pete's Posse from Vermont, calling by Will Mentor.All dances taught. 8:00 to 11:30 p.m., beginners session at 7:45. Lenox Community Center, 65 Walker St. LenoxContraDance.org, or call 528-4007 for information.

Sunday, April 16: Easter egg hunt, 1 p.m. sharp! Monterey Library. See page 18.

Monday, April 17: *Monterey News* deadline, including for candidate statements.

Wednesday, April 19: Community potluck dinner, 6 p.m., Monterey Meetinghouse. Wendy Germain presents Monterey History Project. See page 27.

Saturday, April 22: Earth Day Monterey Milestones Tour
See ad page 11.

—Library, 10 to 11:30, expansion project explained. See pages 6 and 7.

—Transfer station opening, 11 to 12:30, new transfer station and new programs. See page 10.

—Community Center, 10 until 4. Tour inside and out, and learn about events there. See page 11.

Monday, April 24: Adult book group meets to discuss *Hillbilly Elegy*, by J. D. Vance, 7:30 p.m., Monterey Library.

Friday, April 28: Knox Gallery. Joan Dix Blair, *Color Prints*, opens.

Sunday, April 30: Beekeeping workshop, "Native Pollinators". 2 p.m., Community Center. See page 28. Pre-registration.

Friday, May 5: Knox Gallery. Joan Dix Blair artist's talk, 5:30 to 6 p.m. Reception 6 to 7:30 p.m.

March 2017 Contributors

Thank you to Jane and Joel Lubin for their contribution.

We have sent our our annual spring fund appeal through the mail and to people who receive the *Monterey News* via email. We are very much looking forward to the support we typically receive from longtime contributors and folks who are new to keeping the paper available through the mail and at pick-up spots in town.

Wendy Jensen

Monterey News

The *Monterey News* is an independent nonprofit corporation dedicated to fostering communication in the Monterey community. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs. Submissions may be sent via email to montereynews9@gmail.com or to PO Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245.

For advertising rates or other information, contact the Editor at 413-528-4007 or email.

Dog Licenses Expired

Renew before it's too late

Town Clerk Terry Walker wants everyone to be aware that dog licenses expired on March 31. If dogs aren't licensed by May 1, the dog owner will be charged a fine for unlicensed dogs. And don't look to the dogs to pay it!

Town Contact Information

Emergency! 911

Administrative Assistant:
528-1443 x111
admin@montereyma.gov
(for town boards and misc. questions)

Assessor: 528-1443 x115
assessors@montereyma.gov

Building Department: 528-1443 x118 buildingsafety@montereyma.gov

Fire Department (non-emergency): 528-3136
fire_service@montereyfire.org

Highway Department: 528-1734
mhwy@verizon.net

Library: 528-3795
montereylibrary@gmail.com

Police Department (non-emergency): 528-3211
Alternate emergency 528-3211
mpdchief@montereyma.gov

Post Office: 528-4670

Tax Collector: 528-1443 x117
montereytax@yahoo.com
(for questions about your tax bill)

Town Clerk: 528-1443 x113
clerk@montereyma.gov
(for licenses and town records)

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Mailing Labels ..... Joe Baker
Treasurer ..... Steve Pullen

Contributions from local artists this month:
Maureen Banner, pp. 11, 29; George Emmons, p. 23;
Glynis Marsh, p. 12; Bonner McAllester, p. 20.

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